

A detailed illustration of four hands clasped together in a circle, rendered in a green, woodcut-like style. The hands are positioned in the center-left of the page, with the fingers interlaced. The background is a light green gradient.

# **American Bar Association Resource Guide:**

## **Programs to Advance Racial and Ethnic Diversity in the Legal Profession**

This guide is intended for educational and informational purposes only.  
Program descriptions herein do not necessarily reflect the policy position  
of the ABA unless otherwise stated.

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# AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION RESOURCE GUIDE:

## PROGRAMS TO ADVANCE RACIAL AND ETHNIC DIVERSITY IN THE LEGAL PROFESSION

July 2000

### Foreword

**William G. Paul**  
**President, American Bar Association**

During my term as President of the American Bar Association, I chose to highlight one of the most pressing issues in the justice system: The alarming lack of racial and ethnic minority representation in the legal profession. The data are compelling.

Presently, our profession is more than 90 percent white, and enrollment in our law schools is about 80 percent white. But 30 percent of our society are people of color, and in the next few decades it will be 50 percent. These trends put at risk our profession's historic role as the connecting link between our society and the rule of law. One of our goals this year was to establish a foundation for future work by building on successful existing programs that have advanced the cause of diversity in the profession.

This publication is a result of the *ABA Colloquium on Diversity in the Legal Profession* convened in October 1999. The colloquium brought together legal educators, corporate counsel and law firm and bar association leaders to determine how to achieve greater racial and ethnic diversity in the legal profession. Colloquium participants established as our mission "to increase racial and ethnic diversity at all levels of the legal profession." The mission and goals resulting from the colloquium are listed in the first few pages of this guide. Programs are categorized under the goal that they best support.

These programs will help increase opportunities for people of color to attend and graduate from law school, to pass the bar examination and be admitted to practice, and to be placed, retained and advanced in jobs, on the bench, as prosecutors, and throughout the profession. Please keep in mind that this guide is by no means comprehensive. Its purpose is to provide those who wish to enhance racial and ethnic diversity with solid examples of programs that work.

The American Bar Association's commitment to this diversity initiative is profound. With the support of organizations such as the ones listed in the following pages, a long term commitment and effort can be undertaken to significantly enhance racial and ethnic diversity in the legal profession. Because of their commitment, our profession will better reflect the society that we serve.

“  
If a vast democratic republic as diverse — and at times divided — as late twentieth-century America is to survive and flourish, it must cultivate some common spaces where citizens from every corner of society can come together to learn how others live, how others think, how others feel. If not in universities, where? If not young adulthood, when? If not in law schools, why not?”  
— Deputy Attorney General Eric H. Holder

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